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Technical Site Audit Checklist

May 22nd, 2011 - Posted by [GeoffKenyon](#) to [Reporting](#)

The author's posts are entirely his or her own (excluding the unlikely event of hypnosis) and may not always reflect the views of Moz.

We all want to deliver actionable site audits, but doing the research can be a bit overwhelming if you don't have a process in place to systematically go through a site. I have created a site audit checklist that will walk you through how to do a site audit. This will work for most sites - in many cases you will need to customize the checklist a bit as some aspects won't be relevant or are unable to be changed.

Make sure to look at really important pages (high priority landing pages, pages with a lot of links, pages flagged by crawl tools, or pages that the client has specifically asked for help with) in addition to the template pages.

At the end of your audit, don't write a document that says what's wrong with the website. Instead, create a document that says what needs to be done. Then explain why these actions need to be taken

and why they are important. What seems to be really helpful is to provide a prioritized list along with your document of all the actions that you would like them to implement. This list can be handed off to a dev or content team to be implemented easily. These teams can refer to your more thorough document as needed.

Quick Overview

- Check indexed pages
 - Do a site: search
 - How many pages are returned (this can be way off so don't put too much stock in this)?
 - Is the homepage showing up as the first result?
 - If the homepage isn't showing up as the first result, there could be issues, like a penalty or poor site architecture/internal linking, affecting the site.
- Search for the brand and branded terms
 - Is the homepage showing up at the top, or are correct pages showing up.
 - If the proper pages aren't showing up as the first result, there could be issues, like a penalty, in play.
- Check Google's cache for key pages
 - Is the content showing up?
 - Are navigation links present?
 - Are there links that aren't visible on the site?

PRO Tip:

Don't forget to check the text only version of the cached page.

Content

- Homepage content
 - Does the homepage have at least one paragraph?
- Landing pages
 - Do these pages have at least a few paragraphs?
 - Is it template text or is it completely unique?
- Site contains real and substantial content
 - Is there real content on the site or is the "content" simply a list of links.
- Proper keyword targeting
 - Is the intent right?
 - Are there pages targeting head terms, mid-tail, and long-tail keywords?
- Keyword cannibalization
 - Do a site: search Google for important keyword phrases.

- Check for duplicate content/page titles in the SEOmoz Pro Campaign App.

Formatting

- Is the content formatted well and easy to read quickly?
- Are H tags used?
- Are images used?
- Is the text broken down into easy to read paragraphs?

Good Headlines on Blog Posts

- Good headlines go a long way. Make sure the headlines are well written and draw users in.

Amount of content v ads

- Since the implementation of Panda, the amount of ad-space on a page has become important to evaluate.
- Make sure there is significant unique content above the fold.
- If you have more ads than unique content, you are probably going to have a problem.

Additional Reading:

[How to Write Magnetic Headlines](#)

[SEO Copywriting Tips for Improved Link Building](#)

[The Ultimate Blogger Writing Guide](#)

[Tips to Earn Links and Tweets to Your Blog Post](#)

Duplicate Content

There should be one URL for each piece of content

- Do URLs include parameters or tracking code - This will result in multiple URLs for a piece of content.
- Does the same content reside on completely different URLs?

Pro Tip:

Exclude common parameters, such as those used to designate tracking code, in Google Webmaster Tools. Read more at [Search Engine Land](#).

Do a search to check for duplicate content

- Take a content snippet, put it in quotes and search for it.
- Does the content show up elsewhere on the domain?
- Has it been scraped? - If the content has been scraped, you should file a [content removal request](#) with Google.

Sub-domain duplicate content

- Does the same content exist on different sub-domains?

Check for a secure version of the site

- Does the content exist on a secure version of the site?

Check other sites owned by the company

- Is the content replicated on other domains owned by the company?

Accessibility

- Check the robots.txt
 - Has the entire site, or important content been blocked? Is [link equity](#) being orphaned due to pages being blocked via the robots.txt?
- Turn off JavaScript, cookies, and CSS
 - Use the [Web Developer Toolbar](#)
 - Is the content there?
 - Do the navigation links work?
- Now change your user agent to Googlebot.
 - Use the [User Agent Add-on](#)
 - Are they cloaking?
 - Does it look the same as before?

PRO Tip:

Use [SEO Browser](#) to do a quick spot check.

- Check the SEOMoz PRO Campaign
 - Check for 4xx errors and 5xx errors.

Site Architecture

- Hierarchy
 - Are category pages set up in the appropriate way to flow link equity to key pages?
- Landing pages
 - Do they have landing pages high enough in the architecture to receive enough link equity to compete for competitive terms?
- Number of category pages
 - How many category pages are there?
 - Have they been scaled out too much?
 - Category pages should be built out only when there is enough demand for new or sub category pages.
- Pagination/Faceted Navigation
 - Is pagination or faceted navigation more appropriate? Or, should they be used in tandem?
 - Does pagination exist to help long tail content get indexed?
 - Is the pagination prohibitive to crawling (uses JavaScript).
- Number of clicks to content
 - Pages targeting really competitive head terms should be one or two clicks from the homepage.

- Pages targeting moderately competitive keywords should be 2 or three clicks from the homepage.
- Pages targeting the long tail should be 5 clicks away (obviously exceptions must be made here for sites with a ton of content).

Prioritized content

- Most important content should be higher up in the pagination

Additional Reading:

[Successful Site Architecture for SEO](#)

[The SEO Guide to Site Architecture](#)

[Information Architecture and Faceted Navigation](#)

Technical Issues

Proper use of 301's

- Are 301's being used for all redirects?
- If the root is being directed to a landing page, are they using a 301 instead of a 302?
- Use [Live HTTP Headers](#) FireFox plugin to check 301s.

Use of JavaScript

- Is content being served in JavaScript?
- Are links being served in JavaScript? Is this to do PR sculpting or is it accidental?

Use of iframes

- Is content being pulled in via iframes?

Use of Flash

- Is the entire site done in flash, or is flash used sparingly in a way that doesn't hinder crawling?

PRO Tip:

Flash is like garlic. A little bit of garlic in your food can make it taste better. Eating a plate full of garlic would be quite terrible. Likewise, Flash can be added to a site in a way that improves the user's experience, but creating the entire site in flash is not a good idea.

Site Speed

- How long does the page take to load - [Is it significant](#) for users or search engines?
- What [improvements](#) can be made?

Alt text

- Is alt text present?
- Does the alt text use keyword phrases?
- Does the alt text reinforce the topical themes presented in the content?

Check for Errors in Google Webmaster Tools

- Google WMT will give you a good list of technical problems showing up on your site that they are encountering (such as: 4xx and 5xx errors, inaccessible pages in the XML sitemap, and soft 404's)

XML Sitemaps

- Are XML sitemaps in place?
- Are XML sitemaps covering for poor site architecture?
- Are XML sitemaps [structured](#) to show indexation problems?
- Do the sitemaps follow proper XML [protocols](#)?

Canonicalization

 Canonical version of the site established through 301's Canonical version of site is specified in Google Webmaster Tools Rel canonical link tag is properly implemented across the site

- Make sure it points to the correct page, and [every page doesn't point to the homepage](#).

 Uses absolute URLs instead of relative URLs

- This can cause a lot of problems if you have a root domain with secure sections.

URLs

 Clean URLs

- No excessive parameters or session ID's
- URLs exposed to search engines should be static.

 Short URLs

- 115 characters or shorter – this character limit isn't set in stone, but shorter URLs are better for usability.

 Descriptive URLs

- Get your primary keyword phrase in there.

Additional Reading:

[Best Practices for URLs](#)

[URL Rewriting Tool](#)

[mod_rewrite Cheat Sheet](#)

[Creating 301 Redirects With .htaccess](#)

Internal Linking

 Number of links on a page

- 100 is a good target, but [not a rule](#).

 Vertical Links

- Homepage links to category pages.
- Category pages link to sub-category and product pages as appropriate.

- Product pages link to relevant category pages.

Horizontal Links

- Category pages link to other relevant category pages.
- Product pages link to other relevant product pages.

Links are in content

- Does not utilize massive blocks of links stuck in the content to do internal linking.

Footer links

- Does not use a block of footer links instead of proper navigation.
- Does not link to landing pages with optimized anchors.

Good internal anchor text

Check for broken links

- Link Checker and Xenu are good tools for this.

Additional Reading:

[Importance of Internal Linking](#)

[Internal Linking Tactics](#)

[Using Anchor Links to Make Google Ignore The First Link](#)

Title Tags

Unique title tags

- Every page should have a unique title tag.

Keyword rich

- Pages should contain the primary keyword phrase.
- Is possible to use the secondary keyword phrase in a non spammy way?

Primary keyword phrase at the beginning of the title tag

Page titles include branding

- In most cases the brand should be included at the end of the page title to help build a brand or entice users if you are a well known brand

65 - 70 characters in length

- If the title is longer than this, the entirety will not be displayed in the SERPs.

Have they been keyword stuffed by someone else?

Meta Tags

- Meta keywords tag used
 - This data should be removed as competitors can [scrape](#) this data.
- Meta description is appropriate
 - Each page has a unique meta description.
 - Meta descriptions are representative of the content and entice users.
- Rewrite meta descriptions for key pages
 - For key landing pages, write meta descriptions by hand instead of systemically implementing.
- Meta robots tag
 - Noindex pages only appropriate pages.
 - Not blocking important pages.

Helpful tools for doing a site audit:

[Web Developer Toolbar](#)

[User Agent Add-on](#)

[Firebug](#)

[Link Checker](#)

[SEObook Toolbar](#)

[SEOmox Toolbar](#)

[Xenu](#)

[Screaming Frog](#)

[Your own scraper](#)



About GeoffKenyon — Lead online marketing consultant at [Distilled](#). You can read more of my writing at [GeoffKenyon.com](#) or on [twitter](#).

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1,051

Tweet

37

Visits Pageviews Avg. Time on Page Direct Traffic Search Traffic Referral Traffic

N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A

Yikes, looks like something went wrong. Please try again later.

[Post Analytics](#)

111 Comments

+ Add Comment

E-mail me when new comments are posted

Sort comments by popularity



[2 years ago](#)

[James Norquay - Australian](#)

Great points, Seems like a good version for people to begin with when doing a scan of a website. I remember Danny Dover putting a similar audit piece together a while ago yet your version is more in depth =)

But yes I agree with the point above people are spending too much time on link building and not focusing on getting the website at hand fixed first and having it ready for search engines to easily access.

[Reply 8 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[AnandMistry](#)

Can we invite guest on dinner party without making proper food? But obvious not!! :) I am agree with you. If website is ready to beat competition + accurate on page so we don't need to worry during link building campaign. What you think about it?

[Reply 3 4](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[GeoffKenyon](#)

I hope it's helpful. Both link buiding and onsite optimizations are important, but link

building tends to get more attention as it's a bit more high profile. As a result, lot of the time some of the more tedious on site stuff gets neglected :/

[Reply 5 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[Dubs](#)

It seems that on-site opt is shadowed over building powerful links. If the site is not 'search engine friendly', the link building efforts are wasted.

Thanks for the audit checklist, it's nice to have something to refer to real quick when asked to look at a website!

Edited 2 years ago by Dubs

[Reply 1 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)
[searchpl](#)

Yea this should replace the 15 minute SEO audit, this is a good improvement!

[Reply 1 0](#)



Associate

[2 years ago](#)
[gfiorelli1](#)

Great list that I sincerely believe that should be added in the Learn SEO section of SEOmoz.

Don't you agree?

P.S.: that means that a PDF checklist should be added to the post :)

Edited 2 years ago by gfiorelli1

[Reply 4 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

Thanks! I had wanted to make it a pdf as well but getting it formatted well and put into a PDF was proving problematic. I think it would be useful though. When I get it done, I will update the post and let you know.

[Reply 4 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)
[krissy-cca](#)

This list in a nice PDF will be like finding a little nugget of gold when someone stumbles across it :D

[Reply 1 0](#)



■

[2 years ago](#)
[algogmbh petra](#)

That would be very helpful - I was looking for a pdf, too.

[Reply 1 0](#)



■

[2 years ago](#)
[CPU](#)

Anyone wanting a PDF can use software like Cute PDF or Primo PDF which will create a PDF of the page when you select via the select printer option to use the PDF creator that you have downloaded rather than actually print.

It may not be as nicely formatted but still shows everything in a perfectly acceptable manner - plus you get the bonus of the comments below :)

[Reply 2 0](#)



■

[2 years ago](#)
[rocket mary](#)

This is a great checklist! It is really helpful and will be even more so when it's a PDF. Thank you for all the effort you put into it!

[Reply 1 0](#)



●

Member

[2 years ago](#)
[joseph.chambers](#)

I feel like most people don't have JavaScript disabled with all the social sites today.

[Reply 3 0](#)



●

[2 years ago](#)
[Mr. Rangen](#)

What tools do you all use to expedite the time spent on this checklist?

For me it's:

1. Analogx broken link scanner
2. Screaming Frog Spider & WinWebcrawler
3. Raven Research & Design Analyzer (indexed pages, Lynx View, etc.)
4. Optify/Traffic Travis 4 - Specific/Individual URL keywords and saturation
5. The rest we check manually.

[Reply 2 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[Johnny Hopkins](#)

Great post Jeff, very helpful! However, in regards to the first bulletpoint there is one thing I'd like to question. You write:

If the homepage isn't showing up as the first result, there could be issues, like a penalty or poor site architecture/internal linking, affecting the site.

This is something I used to stress out about when the homepage didn't come up first. However looking at `site:overstock.com` and `site:amazon.com`, neither of those homepages come up first either. Do you think there's something going on with these sites too or does the `site:` not show pages in order of importance/authority?

[Reply 2 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[GeoffKenyon](#)

This advice is good for most sites but there's probably a good 20% that will have exceptions. Amazon and Overstock are huge sites and definitely fall into this category. I'm sure Google treats them different than most sites and wouldn't be overly concerned about the homepage not ranking first in these cases. In general though, if the homepage isn't ranking first, I would investigate.

[Reply 1 1](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[Nomanali](#)

Ahhh man, you help me a lot in site auditing, because next week i have a task to audit client site and your post will help me a lot :)

[Reply 2 0](#)



o

[2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

Great. I'm glad the timing worked out well for you!

[Reply 3 0](#)



●

[2 years ago](#)
[Mr. Rangen](#)

OK, so it being a *nice checklist* has now been established =)

Can you answer this to me,

If someone asks you for a site audit, how do you perform keyword saturation/page relevance without running a full-blown keyword research campaign for free?

Edited 2 years ago by Mr. Rangen

[Reply 2 0](#)



o

[2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

This is tough to do but I usually look at analytics data (such as goal conversions and bounce rate) for buckets of keywords (such as head, mid, longtail or categorical buckets) or at a few key pages. Based on that, if it feels like the pages are well done and should perform better, I recommend they invest in kwr. If they aren't open to having me do KWR, I describe some of the process and try to help them understand intent/relevance.

There really isn't a science to this or a good scalable way to do this as there is a lot of human judgement involved :(.

[Reply 1 0](#)



■

[2 years ago](#)
[Mr. Rangen](#)

Thanks for the input!

It is extremely tough not too over commit yourself in this industry. Appreciate you

taking the time to share your strategies.

[Reply 1 1](#)



• [2 years ago](#)

carlosobregon@gmail.com

Great list, the only thing I would add is to check for hidden spam, doing an advanced search in the domain and looking for the usual spam keywords.

[Reply 2 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)

[thedan1984](#)

Nice checklist. I've been collecting a variety of SEO's Audit checklists over the past few months (started off with Danny Dover's from his SEO Secret's book.) Your list has a few unique items I haven't seen yet, definitely going to have to give it a thorough re-read and make sure I didn't miss anything.

[Reply 2 0](#)



○ [2 years ago](#)

[blackballonline](#)

That's a great book - I thought for a second this was straight from there. :)

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)

[blu42media](#)

Wow, this was a great read... definitely getting bookmarked! Thanks for including all the additional reference links too, this was really helpful!

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)

[paulbaguley](#)

This is a great checklist - Good stuff

[Reply 1 0](#)

• [2 years ago](#)
[fares_a](#)

we must also say that your book is an excellent SEO METHODOLOGY I consider a standard

[Reply 1 0](#)

• [2 years ago](#)
[stevejlock](#)

Love the flash / garlic comment - thats genius I will use that one for sure.

Great post IMHO you can't have enough checklists.

:~)

[Reply 1 0](#)

• [2 years ago](#)
[Oxzen Media](#)

Great post! Thanks for putting that together--its nice to see an overall list, we use a lot of different tools when we put together an on-site audit, so this will be a great reference.

[Reply 1 0](#)

• [2 years ago](#)
[fluffy](#)

First time I go good argument do not use keywords in meta data.

Also number of characters in title is useful data.

Thanks

[Reply 1 0](#)

leeroper

- [2 years ago](#)
[leeroper](#)

Good tip on Keyword cannibalization not something I often do, I will remember to look at that one more often. It always amazes me how it's very hard to form a checklist but somehow most of these points are generally covered when I do a technical site check. Good list thanks!

[Reply 1 0](#)



- [2 years ago](#)
[soliwalker](#)

Geoff,

Thank You!

This is extremely helpful and timing. I'm in the process of defining a site audit mechanism for one of our sites. And this will definitely make things easier for us. I'm currently managing the analytics implementation (SiteCatalyst, Google Analytics) for a government agency of a site very deep with thousands of pages (with many content owners)

Do you have any thoughts around non-commercial sites audit best practices?

Thanks in advance,

Solange Walker -

[Reply 1 0](#)



- [2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

I would probably go through the same checklist but filter/prioritize items based on the overall goals of your site. Are you trying to emphasize a particular aspect or drive traffic to a certain section? All efforts should support these goals. So if it is a content based site and the goal is long tail traffic you should be trying to improve the SA/int linking so that you get as many pages indexed as possible and focus less on passing link equity as head terms aren't your goal in this example

[Reply 1 1](#)



- [2 years ago](#)
[Oxzen Media](#)

Awesome-town!!! That list is sweet.

I've found that doing GOOD site audit for prospective clients can make all the difference in their decision to work with us or not. If I can show them the value of what we can do to a site that they already have to make it more effective, then they never doubt our abilities to do great work off-site. There are a few things on this list that I haven't been checking! Now I will!

Thank you

Edited 2 years ago by Oxzen Media

[Reply 1 0](#)



- [2 years ago](#)
[jmansd](#)

Very Nice!

[Reply 1 0](#)



- [2 years ago](#)
[blackballonline](#)

What's nice about this checklist is it can also be used in the planning stage to identify - "must haves" and "wishlist" items by phases. Thanks for a great resource - looking forward to the PDF.

[Reply 1 0](#)



- Member
[2 years ago](#)
[WebpageFX](#)

This post was great. I found this post to be "on-page SEO in a nutshell," but you also included some points that I haven't thought of yet. Thanks for sharing!

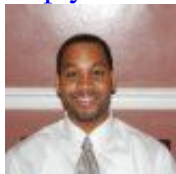
[Reply 1 0](#)



- [2 years ago](#)
[jackson_lo](#)

What a handy checklist! Thanks for putting this together Geoff!

[Reply 1 0](#)



- Member
[2 years ago](#)
[DaBrian Marketing Group, LLC](#)

A PDF version would be helpful. Thanks for the update audit list.

[Reply 1 0](#)

- [2 years ago](#)
[S-E-O](#)

Geoff Kenyon

Just Entered in the Amazing World of SEOMoz. I am Very Impressed by the Audit Checklist you have provided. Appreciated.

-Brijen

[Reply 1 0](#)



- [2 months ago](#)
[royalnehal](#)

@[Geoff Kenyon](#), Rand F.

ONE OF THE GREATEST POSTS ON MOZ

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [7 months ago](#)
[Nick-SEOSpark](#)

This is a fantastic list and well worth bookmarking for any SEO consultant. In regards to not including link data: it is specifically a technical audit that looks at technical issues. Not everything can be covered in one single audit but what is covered is the technical side, hence the name of the post!

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [9 months ago](#)
[rehan09](#)

This post is very handy and makes it very easy to follow in a SEO process. Thanks for great content!

[Reply 1 0](#)



• Member
[2 months ago](#)
[andykuiper](#)

Still very up to date - thanks Geoff :-)

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [24 days ago](#)
[Bryant-Jaquez](#)

One of the best that I've read.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [14 days ago](#)
[rborole06](#)

I checking my site

but when i checking cache version, font is showing increased for text in that cache page.

What can be the reason?

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [19 days ago](#)
[chankeypathak](#)

Best post ever!

Thanks! This is all one should look for in SEO.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [20 days ago](#)
[Rameez-Ramzan](#)

Well Defined Post I have seen, It give me tons of information about website Audit. Now I am able to do Audit myself. :)

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [a year ago](#)
[Chris Irwin](#)

started building my own.... then found this. Thanks a lot Geoff!

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [a year ago](#)
[hanchee](#)

At last, this is the checklist I have been looking for. Thanks!!!

[Reply 1 0](#)



Member

[2 years ago](#)

[Dealerskins Search](#)

I'm so glad to see an in depth list like this. I've been working on my own, but it looks like you already did it for me. Bookmarked.

[Reply 1 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[junioruf](#)

I've been using your list as a base to augment my own and it's worked wonders when dealing with my programmers.

[Reply 1 0](#)

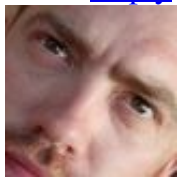


[2 years ago](#)

[junioruf](#)

You should include installation of analytics and the finer elements of that to your list though.

[Reply 1 0](#)



Member

[2 years ago](#)

[Maarten van den Bos](#)

Today i used this list for first time.

Just great. If i have any improvements i will post it here.

Thanks!

[Reply 1 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)
[maxom](#)

Very clear and helpfull post! Thank U very much@!

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[acarpentier](#)

Great checklist, very usefull.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [a year ago](#)
[Cappy](#)

Wow, all the content and links in this post is like a book. Very thorough, good stuff!!! Thanks.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Rayonnage](#)

Great list, thank you very much. Internal links is probably one of the most important part.Rayonnage from Setam.

Edited 2 years ago by KeriMorgret

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Mister Gubu](#)

I have published a translation to spanish of this great article with some minor modifications in <http://blog.atrioweb.com/seo-posicionamiento-web/auditoria-de-posicionamiento-seo-web>. Hope it likes.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Marie Haynes](#)

This is great stuff. It's getting bookmarked! Thanks for such a great list.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Andor](#)

It's really a great list und some points are often still not in mind even after years. Such list are always a helping hand, so thanks for writing them down.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Jean Madden](#)

Excellent checklist..... found a few I hadn't done in a while so got some homework from it ta.
Jean Madden

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Aaron Schinke](#)

This is a fantastic checklist! You also make a great point about staying actionable and positive after your analysis. Thanks!

[Reply 1 0](#)



○ [2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

Yep. Everything comes down to being actionable. If you give someone a bunch of information but don't tell them how to apply it, then it isn't really that helpful for them.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Benj25](#)

Invaluable!

[Reply 1 0](#)



• Member
[2 years ago](#)
[Nick Stamoulis](#)

Great list! It's important to take a step back when running a site audit and objectively look at your site like a 3rd party outsider. Sometimes site owners can get in their own way and fail to see areas that need improvement.

[Reply 1 0](#)



○ [2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

It's easy to get really focused and become blinded to a huge problems. Getting a fresh set of eyes definitely is really helpful.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• Member
[2 years ago](#)
[kchandler](#)

I found the first step in any site audit is to review the robots.txt. There has been countless numbers of times that i wish i would of done that first to figure out indexing and ranking issues.

[Reply 1 0](#)



○ [2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

I've done that once or twice. Makes me want to hit my head against a wall. That's why checklists/processes are awesome!

[Reply 2 0](#)

■

[2 years ago](#)
[kchandler](#)

It's so true. I will have to say, this post has inspired me to write an audit checklist of my own :)

[Reply 1 0](#)

●

[2 years ago](#)
[SEMojo](#)

Great checklist. Way too often proper On-Site Optimization falls by the way side. I've noticed that even some SEO companies working with Fortune 500s miss things as simple as canonical redirects.

[Reply 1 0](#)

●

[2 years ago](#)
[Mags](#)

It's a great check list, thanks. It will definitely help me to make my on-site audit reports better organised! I think I will re-audit my own blog as I already think about a few improvements. Its really funny how we, SEO bloggers give recommendations to clients and very often still have some areas to improve on our own sites:) but noone is perfect:) its good that there are still some aspects which can give much better SERP results. but anyway... thanks for a great post!

[Reply 1 0](#)

○

[2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

Glad it's useful. Funny how true the old phrase "the cobbler's children don't have shoes" is

Edited 2 years ago by GeoffKenyon

[Reply 1 0](#)

●

[2 years ago](#)
[Leo Jiang](#)

So greate for this seo check list! on page optimization and link-building is very important for SEO

work.Thank for your sharing...

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[MoosaHemani](#)

Great points and let me say this is a complete site audits that works with almost all the websites... I think this is great because people have previously write much about it but somehow the list isn't enough or sometimes incomplete especially in the ecommerce website.

The best part of this audit list is this is best even for the ecommerce website.

Thank you for the bookmarkable resource!

[Reply 2 1](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[seoug2](#)

Thanks for this exhaustive list. I would like to know what you mean by - "Do a site: search Google for important keyword phrases" What is it supposed to tell ?

[Reply 1 0](#)



○ [2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

so if you were working on REI's site and you wanted to see if any pages were being cannibalized for the term "bikes" - <http://bit.ly/jjN11L> - This would show the top pages ranking for the term. The goal is to make sure that you don't have content competing for the same keyword, or if you do, that you have internal linking that reinforces which one is most important. So you would have the less important pages linking to the primary page with optimized anchor text.

[Reply 4 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[practicalseo](#)

Wow Geoff, quite an extensive audit list, this will be a great back to article for reference checking if I missed anything :)

Also, I agree with your note not to write a document saying what is wrong weith the website, offering solutions and than explaining some details is far better approach for the clients.

Edited 2 years ago by practicalseo

[Reply 1 0](#)



o

[2 years ago](#)

[GeoffKenyon](#)

While people want to see a document, I think sometimes they like a simple prioritized list of action items more because it is an easily digestible tactical document.

[Reply 2 0](#)



■

[2 years ago](#)

[practicalseo](#)

Yeah, I agree with you. A list of things to do is easier to understand given some explanataion and it also shows that you are working on the SEO plan, so the clients knows from the start what to expect, which is why I find this approach to be great.

[Reply 1 0](#)



•

Member

[2 years ago](#)

[Qon](#)

Great list! Would you happen to have it in PDF also?

[Reply 1 0](#)



o

[2 years ago](#)

[GeoffKenyon](#)

Working on it - I will update the post when I get the PDF done

[Reply 2 0](#)



■

[2 years ago](#)

[alinehme](#)

Great Post! Thank you so much is there a PDF Version yet!?

[Reply 1 0](#)



[a year ago](#)
[Dubs](#)

Great checklist... is there a PDF Version?

[Reply 1 0](#)



Member

[2 years ago](#)
[Buildmark](#)

Great list, and pleased to find that I have done a lot of them in my most recent site audit, although there are a few to go back and add - thanks!!

One thing I would add, is identifying what are the key actions for a user in an area of the site and ensuring that the page(s) aid the completion of this action.

Cheers

[Reply 1 0](#)



o

[2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

I tried to focus on technical stuff but there are a few things I'm going to update and I'm planning on adding in some usability stuff.

[Reply 1 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)
[ImAnand](#)

Really great actionable check list to follow . It also help us to organize and prioritize SEO things effectively,

[Reply 1 0](#)



● [2 years ago](#)
[akamust](#)

great list, thank you.

i would also add a specific check of the sitemap (and xml feeds). i know you already listed the errors in the sitemap, and that's maybe the most important part of it :) but, especially when dealing with huge websites, a deeper check of xml sitemaps can help with indexing issues.

[Reply 1 0](#)



○ [2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

I skipped over xml sitemaps - I'll add in a section on that. Thanks for the heads up.

[Reply 2 0](#)



● [2 years ago](#)
[Seotallica](#)

I have thoroughly reviewed the checklist and I can say its by far one of the most complete I have seen in a long time. Because of this I have translated it to Spanish and postd in in my blog.

The only difference you will find is that I only left the contextual links in the Checklist and not the "more info" links since all of them are in english and Im targeting spanish Seomoz users...other language speakers are welcome as well of course.

I hope you find this usefull

[Checklist para la auditoria SEO de un sitio web](#)

[Reply 1 0](#)



● [2 years ago](#)
[vietlk](#)

I have a question why "Does not link to landing pages with optimized anchors at footer links"

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Nickfb76](#)

as soon as I saw the title I immediately looked at your list for internal linking. Your post did a fantastic job of outlining the fundamentals to successful internal linking! So many times websites don't utilize their own pages value by properly adding internal links! It's really an SEO technique that people overlook.

The rest of your audit checklist is fantastic as well. It covers pretty much everything that I offer through my own site audits! Great job!

[Reply 1 0](#)



o [2 years ago](#)
[GeoffKenyon](#)

Internal linking seems to be one of those things that gets overlooked, or simply, just executed very poorly. Glad that you're big on doing internal linking right.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• Member
[2 years ago](#)
[Gyorgy](#)

The seo browser is a great tool; however, sometimes it can't load certain websites. I also use the Lynx web browser which runs in the OSX Terminal. It's among the most basic browsers and linux users probably know this tool. It's also available for Windows and it's free.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• Member
[2 years ago](#)
[timwills](#)

Nice checklist. Thanks for the post.

[Reply 1 0](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Kinaja](#)

Very usefull post! Though we as SEO pros cover almost all the elements mentioned, the list is properly organized leaving little scope to miss out something.

[Reply 1 0](#)



Member

[2 years ago](#)

[Turkey](#)

Yes agree with many others, great check list, we use many of the items but its great to get a fresh look at little things we maybe missing.

[Reply 1 0](#)



Member

[2 years ago](#)

[ericfacas](#)

Amazingly thorough checklist Geoff! This is as comprehensive and well thought out as I've seen.

Is there any possible way I could talk you into converting this to a "how-to" document to help teach volunteers how to conduct effective technical site audits for non-profits and NGOs? I know that's a lot to ask but it's for a great cause (free hands-on training for volunteers and free seo services for non-profits). In return, we can promote you on our site, [Mediacause.org](#), as well as our social profiles.

If you're will to hear more about what I have in mind, please e-mail me at [eric \[at\] mediacause.org](mailto:eric@mediacause.org).

Thanks!

Eric

Edited 2 years ago by KeriMorgret

[Reply 1 0](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[JonR Wilhelm](#)

A huge thank you. I too have a few checklists I have collected over the last year and I am always looking to improve them.

[Reply 1 0](#)

Member

[2 years ago](#)

[dangotti](#)

This is just what I have been looking for! Finally, a thorough checklist approach to a site audit and in a logical layout too. Great job!

[Reply 1 0](#)

[2 years ago](#)

[efr0702](#)

Wow. A great, comprehensive list

[Reply 1 1](#)

[2 years ago](#)

[marcelocustodio](#)

Hi Portuguese speakers! I'm proud to announce the first authorized translation of a SEOMoz Post to Portuguese. It's at <http://goo.gl/3417S>.

Please share!

Thank you!

Marcelo Custódio

[Reply 1 1](#)

Member

[2 years ago](#)

[diyawards](#)

Great to me, thank u !

[Reply 1 1](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Brandignity](#)

This is a nice healthy list of factors to explore. These locations are really important to explore whether you are a new website owner or a seasoned veteran.

[Reply 1 1](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Mathuseo](#)

Absolutely awesome, thx for the great audit. will put some more points to it and use it for some of my buisness. thx

[Reply 1 1](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[frostmill](#)

Geoff,

Very nice post. I ll have to print this post and put it on my desk and use this as my primary checklist. Thanks for the share.

[Reply 1 1](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[Josh Gill](#)

Thanks so much for this awesome checklist!

[Reply 1 1](#)



• [2 years ago](#)
[kkulmi](#)

Great list of Parameters for an Site Audit I do believe that SEO is 90 percent onpage and 10 percent off page.

Edited 2 years ago by kkulmi

[Reply 1 1](#)



Member

[2 years ago](#)

[WilliamBay](#)

Perfect! This is an excellent companion to use with the Pro Web Tool On Page Optimizer. While it does a great job, I think you have to have a human review everything still.

[Reply 1 1](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[arom](#)

hi plz send me deatial use of seo and please send me setp wise document touse it

Edited 2 years ago by arom

[Reply 1 2](#)



[2 years ago](#)

[AnandMistry](#)

Great list for site audit.

I am also looking forward to read blog post on external link audit.

Maximum SEO guys in India are spending too much time on link building rather than focusing on valuable + diamond stuffs as you describe.

If on page stuff is proper so link building will get maximum rewards. What do you think about it?

If the SEOmoz team will compose one blog post on the following topic so it will be good for all link builders.

How to compile a rock solid link building campaign associated to current trends and suitable to industry?

[Reply 6 16](#)

o

[9 months ago](#)[NasirA](#)

Not sure why all the thumbs down here. It's a great list but I agree with Anand that external links/backlinks should be part of any site audit. Although, it does say "Technical Site Audit" so maybe it's just for on-site issues. Either way, if you're checking a site that you may be doing SEO on you certainly want to check backlinks since they play such a huge role in rankings. If you don't check that, you're missing a huge piece.

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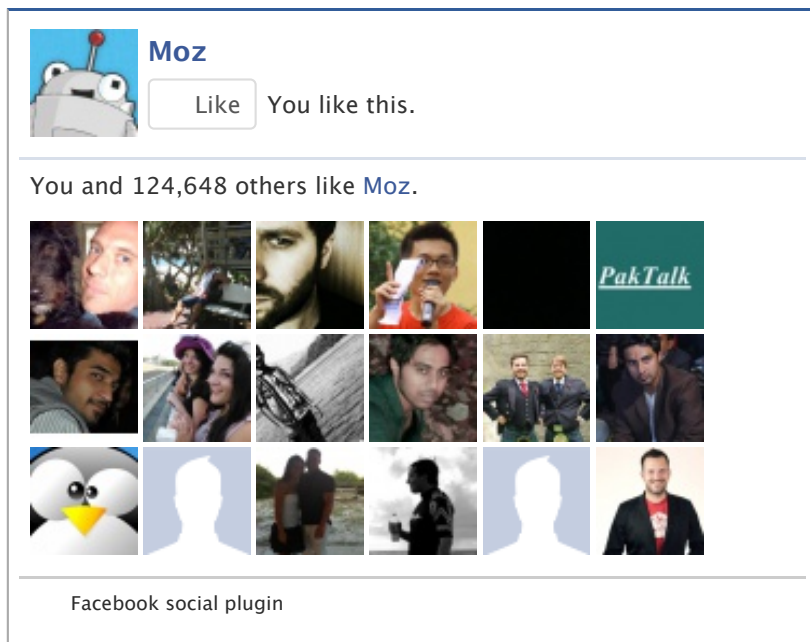
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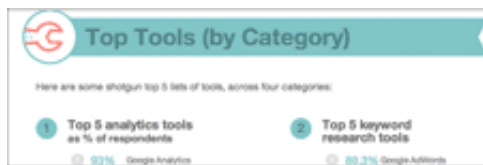
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